

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Illinois, for yielding time to me.

May I begin by thanking the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) for his work on this bill, and for his work with the Senate in getting a bill that I think is one that we all appreciate for what it will mean for the memorial that has been under discussion.

I honor the gentleman from Arizona for his service, and understand and appreciate his anxiety to get on with the memorial. Let me say, as a child of World War II who grew up during the war here in the city, I understand why this memorial means so much to the men who fought this war.

It is the case, however, that anyone who loves the city and admires the uniqueness of Washington and the Mall could not possibly want the particular memorial that will go up. The memorial, of course, as I said in my own remarks on the House floor on last Tuesday, was pretty much a done deal, in any case. At least we will not be adding to the injury that many Americans feel about having any man-made object in the midst of one of Washington's great vistas, especially a very controversial design that does not begin to do justice to the men and women of World War II, who brought justice to the world.

At least now we have understood that no memorial can rise without administrative review and oversight. The bill assures us that there will be experts from the National Capital Planning Commission to wrestle with the many problems that remain when we are putting a football field-sized memorial where no object was ever meant to be. This poses unprecedented challenges that I hope the NCPC will meet.

What we are doing is putting a huge memorial below the water table, and we have to have somebody there, for example, to figure out how to pump water, which will need to be pumped out continuously, and how to make sure that it is treated and does not go into the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay.

Let me put everybody on notice now, they had better not put a contraption on the Mall that looks like some kind of machinery in order to do that. We have to find a way to do that.

We were very concerned about the wooden foundations on which the Washington Monument is built. In those days, that is how one built a monument. Disturbing the subsoil when the water is pumped out presents a real challenge to the NCPC. Nobody has ever figured out how to do that. They had better figure out how to do that.

What do we do to deal with the old growth trees that are a proxy for the beauty of the Mall itself? We had certainly better not knock them down. If the NCPC had not already been there, the National Park Service, in preparation for the memorial, would already have concrete helicopter pads on the Mall. The NCPC, I thank them very

much, stopped that. That is but one indication of why we do need administrative oversight.

For those who come in from Maryland and Virginia, for the millions of tourists who come every day, the NCPC still has to figure out how this memorial, with its tour buses, with its traffic, can go up without closing 17th Street to traffic. That is a challenge I would not want to have.

Many of the elements of the Mall now, such as the lighting and sculptural elements, will be in the hands of the NCPC, so not just anything the builders choose will go up.

I struggled very hard to have this wonderful memorial put in a unique spot. I want Members to go to Constitutional Gardens. Constitutional Gardens is a huge space hidden right off from the Mall. The reason nobody knows about it is because there is a line of trees as one marches toward the Lincoln Memorial, and we have to go up over a hill to see it, but then we come upon a huge space with a wonderful pool and we say, why is there nothing here?

There is nothing there, and that was the first site that everybody wanted for the World War II memorial. I am very, very sorry that that was not the site chosen. Then it would not have been in competition with anything else. It would have been the first memorial to rise there. It is a huge and wonderfully undiscovered space.

Mr. Speaker, I worry about what we are doing to our Mall, quite apart from the World War II memorial, because everybody knew that the World War II memorial, if any memorial deserved to be on the Mall, the World War II memorial did.

I just want to use my 3 minutes left to warn the Congress away from fooling with the Mall. We who live in the District have, in essence, been left by the Framers to be guardians of our city. The Framers always wanted people to live here, people who did not come and go, like Members of Congress or tourists.

I am a fourth-generation Washingtonian for whom this city and its history, not just the city as it is today, means everything. The Mall, Mr. Speaker, is the urban equivalent of the Grand Canyon. There should never be anything in the middle of the Grand Canyon. There should never be anything planted straight in the middle of the Mall.

That is done now. What we have to remember, though, is that the Mall is a very small, centrally-located spot. There is a huge competition to continue to put things on the Mall. It is already crowded. We are grateful that President Reagan signed the Commemorative Works Act, which keeps us from willy-nilly putting anything that comes to mind on the Mall to any person whom we happen to admire.

There was opposition to this memorial, and that opposition has done an important service. Without that oppo-

sition, the memorial design would not have been scaled down. There was opposition in the Senate, there was opposition throughout the country. What we would have had was a gargantuan embarrassment to all Americans, and especially to our veterans.

In a democracy, opposition of this kind matters, and often can and in this case has resulted in improvement. Here, unfortunately, we have had a redesign which, like so many redesigns, is pedestrian and will be, unfortunately, invidiously compared with the evocative simplicity of the Vietnam Memorial.

Let this memorial be the last of its kind on the Mall. The NCPC has thoughtfully suggested many other locations in and around the Mall for future memorials.

Finally, let me ask Members to take a walk before the construction begins. Go up to the Washington monument site and look at that unobstructed vista for the last time. I ask Members to see it while they can still contemplate our two great Presidents whose monuments lie at either end of that axis.

And please remember this, that the only eternal cities in the world are not located abroad. They are not only Rome and Paris. Washington is meant to be an eternal city because it is the home of our eternal democratic values.

□ 1030

One of those eternal places in this eternal city is our Mall. It is one of our last remaining spaces left to us by the framers. Let us remember what it was really meant to be.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), who is the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I know that for Members one of the most special times we have is when we get a chance to help World War II veterans receive the medals.

Most of them decided not to wait around for them. They decided to get home. They received their couple dollars and change and got their train pass and skedaddled home so they could be with their loved ones and get back with everyday living.

Now, in the waning years of their lives, they ask us for help to recover the medals that should have been handed over to them once they left the service.

Many times I ask or they are asked by the media during these presentations "why?" They do not do it for themselves; that is the most striking thing. They ask for the medals so that they have something that can be held so they can give it to their children and then their children can give it to their grandchildren so that there is a memory of service before self, of people sacrificing their lives, of friends and loved ones in some very harsh and